

R - Mr. William C. Trueheart

March 8, 1951.

OLI - Mr. A. Sidney Buford, III

Biographic Intelligence Files

As requested in your memorandum dated January 30, 1951, I return herewith three copies of a questionnaire on biographic files which have been completed by EI, DC/RM and VD respectively, in connection with the proposed survey of personality files by the IAC.

BI, in returning its copy of the questionnaire, made the following comment concerning item 6 - Category of Personalities Covered:

"According to BI's interpretation of existing directives, it has primary responsibilities for categories a, b and c. It does not engage in the collection of information concerning persons in d, e, f and g. Such material about them as is received in the normal course of events is only filed in those cases where the activities of such persons overlap into categories a, b and c. It should be noted that BI's files ~~do~~ include the files of the Who's Who Branch of The Department of the Army."

DC/RM returned a copy of the questionnaire with the following statement:

". . . As you know, DC/R has no "biographic" files as such, and therefore it is impracticable to use the form referred to as far as our records are concerned. Strictly biographic material is filed permanently in BI. However, despatches and telegrams from the Foreign Service posts frequently contain information concerning individuals. These documents cover all fields of human activity all over the world. Names of individuals when contained in these documents are usually card-indexed for our 3X5 indices. The extent of such card-indexing depends largely on the subject content of each document, and the cards are primarily employed as finding media, that is, to enable us to locate the basic documents. In no sense are the cards prepared for biographical purposes. These card indexes are also used for intelligence purposes, security checks, etc. The security classifications of the documents range from unclassified to Top Secret.

State Dept. declassification & release instructions on file

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The cards are filed alphabetically by name, whereas the documents are filed subjectively and geographically in accordance with our Records Codification Manual. Despatches and telegrams from the Foreign Service posts are prepared in reproducible form, and copies are distributed to other Federal agencies according to subject content.

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Although SY maintains a record of the names of foreigners which appear in its files, that Division feels that it would be inadvisable to complete a copy of the questionnaire. In this connection, SY has provided the following information:

" . . . However, we do have in our files spotty information on foreigners that we have collected in connection with our security activities. These files do not represent in any sense of the word complete background information on the individual but are mostly merely spot activities of the individuals. These files are classified as CONFIDENTIAL and are indexed on 5X8 cards."

In view of BI's responsibility for the biographic coverage of foreigners in the political, economic, cultural and sociological fields, that Division as a matter of course avails itself of the facilities of DC/R, SY, VB and other divisions of the Department, as well as of certain outside agencies, in its normal operations. It is believed, however, that for all practical purposes the data submitted herewith will provide an adequate basis, so far as the Department is concerned, for the projected study of available biographic files.

Attachments

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